

CRITICISM OF RADIO FREE EUROPE

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## CRITICISM OF RADIO FREE EUROPE

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## CRITICISM OF RADIO FREE EUROPE

### I. Summary

The following is a summary of the major criticisms of Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Free Europe Press (FEP) as expressed by US and foreign officials, US newspaper correspondents, and native listeners (satellite defectors, emigres, legal travelers, and individuals behind the Iron Curtain). Information is dated late 1955-1956.

#### A. RFE's Overemphasis on Propaganda

##### 1. News/Information vs. Propaganda

The three groups do not explicitly define what they mean by "propaganda." From the material examined, its meaning ranges from news commentary, exhortations to revolt, attacks on individuals, to information on border conditions.

Correspondents and listeners agree that propaganda is overemphasized in programming and that more news and factual information is desirable. US officials do not advance views on the relative merits of news and propaganda. Their criticism focuses on the exaggeration and manner of presentation of RFE propaganda, not on the fact that propaganda is programmed.

##### 2. Reaction to Types of Propaganda

The opinions of correspondents and listeners on types of propaganda show considerable uniformity. Commentary geared to news is welcomed and recommended, although some opinion in both groups holds that even this kind of propaganda is apathetically received. One official comment supports this view.

Propaganda on liberation and propaganda inflaming feelings or inciting to action are deplored. Attacks on individuals also are deplored but for different reasons depending upon the respondent group. Correspondents report that individuals are sometimes unjustly attacked. Listeners do

not mention mistaken accusations, but instead disapprove the undesirable consequences which impel the individuals attacked to greater loyalty to the regime and to greater severity toward the population.

Opinions conveyed by correspondents and listeners differ on propaganda advising the population how to respond to conditions in their homelands. Correspondents report that the local population resents such advice. Though mentioned only twice by listeners, both reactions to such advice were favorable. Despite the fact they tend to discourage propaganda, correspondents and defectors alike recommend programming some kind of propaganda such as anti-regime attacks, or more information to persuade the population of US strength vis-a-vis the Soviet bloc.

#### B. Unreliability of RFE Broadcasts

The alleged unreliability or inaccuracy of RFE broadcasts is asserted by all three groups but in contexts that are sometimes vague or incomparable. Inaccuracy may relate to estimates of the situation and its potentialities, to a description of existing conditions, to statements of simple facts, or even to incorrect pronunciation. For each there are isolated examples of criticism. In only one case did a US official define what he meant by inaccuracy in his reference to RFE's assertion concerning the disintegration of a satellite Communist Party. Examples of this type of error are not directly corroborated by correspondents and listeners, but seem implied in some of their more general criticism. Listeners also charge that emigre broadcasters are out of touch with the realities. What specific items of information or judgment occasioned statements by listeners that RFE is inaccurate or false are not indicated in available material. Correspondents speak of events and self-criticism on the part of the satellite regimes having out-run RFE's ability to keep pace.

The VOA and the BBC are often held by correspondents and defectors alike to be more "objective" and "accurate" although not as popular as RFE. Available reports do not indicate how seriously or slightly RFE is thought to offend on this score of inaccuracy. Although none of the correspondents stated that RFE was objective, some defectors asserted they found RFE's news objective and accurate. Whatever the extent of the imputed inaccuracy and the validity of the criticism, what emerges is a measure of

agreement by all three groups on some undefined kind and degree of unreliability and inaccuracy of RFE broadcasts, but specifics are either lacking or not comparable.

C. Tone

All three groups express the opinion that some of RFE's propaganda has an undesirable tone (the term "strident" is used by representatives of all groups). This charge applies presumably to the "inflammatory" type of propaganda mentioned or implied by all groups.

D. Counterproductiveness

US officials mean by counterproductiveness that RFE vitiates the propaganda and information activities carried on under their jurisdiction. Regime protests to US diplomatic missions are accompanied by direct or indirect restriction of the missions' own information programs.

E. Communist Orientation of RFE

A number of articles contain accusations that RFE employs Communists among its emigres and disseminates pro-Communist propaganda. These are traceable mainly to a West German Sudeten anti-RFE campaign, and on one occasion to a named Czech exile. This charge is not voiced by US officials or the listener group.

F. FEP Balloon Leaflets

The almost total lack of data on correspondents' opinions and specific leaflets precludes any accurate comparison of correspondents' and defectors' views on the effectiveness of FEP balloon leaflets. However, according to the scanty data available, the ineffectiveness imputed to balloon propaganda by correspondents citing Western officials is not supported by the defectors, the majority of whom believe it effective. Sulzberger reported that the Ten Demands were "foolish." What the local populace thought about them is not evident from the data, though one defector mentioned they were ineffective, another that they were "interesting," and still another stated he was "impressed."

Other comments by the correspondent group such as the physical hazards involved and Communist regime criticism find neither corroboration nor contradiction among defectors.

## II. Survey of Material Examined

Criticism of RFE by US officials is represented in the opinions expressed by diplomatic mission chiefs and other officials in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania. This criticism has been supplemented by comments occasionally volunteered by members of friendly embassies. The official comment examined is of limited value for the present study because of the small number of opinions reported, its general nature, and the lack of specific and illustrative supporting data. US and foreign officials do not make clear what the basis of their criticism is. In the material available, criticism of RFE seems to be based partly on Communist regime reaction, and partly on their estimates of the mood and receptiveness of the captive populations to Western and RFE broadcasts, as well as on talks with satellite residents. On one occasion criticism was based on an examination of RFE scripts measured against the situation judged to exist in the country in question.

The sample of criticism by US correspondents also is relatively small and lacking in homogeneity. It comprises nine individual evaluations (including one British), of which four are published, and five were given privately to RFE. Of the four published, two are extensive critiques of RFE, and the others contain passing or indirect references to RFE. Two "candid" critiques of RFE by writers who are citizens of Communist Poland speaking to Western sources have been included for a comparison of their opinions with others. One was by a correspondent of the Trybuna Ludu, and the other was by a group of Polish writers traveling in the West.

Also included in this study is the criticism of RFE which appeared in the articles concerning Communist infiltration of RFE and the allegedly pro-Communist propaganda broadcast by RFE employees.

The sources of information for US correspondents are mainly residents of the satellites (often from "all walks of life" and to all appearances a random selection) and the views of American and friendly diplomats.

For the listener group sample, a total of 78 reports were analyzed in the survey of satellite audience criticism and reactions to RFE broadcasts. All reports are recent, having been published in 1956, although in a few cases the information was acquired during the latter part of 1955.

Nationals of five satellites contributed comments. The sampling, broken down geographically, shows that 26 sources were Czech nationals, 16 Hungarian, 16 Polish, 13 Bulgarian, and 7 Rumanian. Comments were received from four types of sources: defectors, legal emigrants, legal travelers, and individuals still residing in a satellite country. Thirty-three of the sources were not described in sufficient detail to be assigned to one of the four categories. Of the total of identifiable sources, 29 were defectors, 6 satellite residents, 5 legal emigrants, and 5 legal travelers.

Sources came from all walks of life including peasants, factory workers, students, teachers and other professional people, businessmen and artists. Wide variations in intelligence, educational background, and social and economic levels of sources were encountered. Sources varied also in age but the largest number were young adults. That this is the group to which RFE appeals most strongly is suggested by the fact that a number of sources stated that while RFE was their own preference, their parents preferred the BBC, a choice influenced by their wartime listening.

No significant differences were evident in the reports of the various nationalities represented or of the four types of sources. Although certain groups commented on specific programs broadcast only to their area, the type of programs singled out for approval or disapproval was similar for all national groups. The limited size of the sample and the lack of biographic data concerning the sources has made it impossible to break the reports down into any useful sub-divisions.

25X1X6 The reports surveyed include interviews conducted by RFE, 25X1X6

There were no substantial differences in the kind of criticism contained in the "intelligence reports" from that appearing in RFE interviews. For these reasons all reports have been considered without reference to origin or type of source.

The validity of the criticism expressed by US officials, correspondents, and listeners is subject to qualification. The views of US officials may sometimes be colored by the various objectives which they seek to achieve. Their objectives also

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may be partially vitiated by the repercussions caused by RFE. Some correspondents are superficially informed on the ulterior motives and modus operandi of Communist regimes as well as on the complexities of propaganda operations. Defectors' opinions may be influenced by their desire to flatter and by the difference in outlook occasioned simply by their being outside the Iron Curtain. The very fact of their defection often classes them as an unusual, atypical group whose attitudes and opinions may not be characteristic of those who remain behind the Iron Curtain.



### III. Views of US and Foreign Officials

US officials have criticized RFE for its counterproductiveness, unreliability, and for use of a strident or inappropriate tone in its propaganda. Foreign officials have expressed the opinion that RFE is ineffective.

The criticism of US officials is unanimous in characterizing RFE propaganda as counterproductive, a term which means that RFE negates the liberalization developments taking place, or hampers Embassy informational or propaganda activities (presumably USIS displays, exchange of publications, US visitors, and the like). Irritated and antagonized by RFE broadcasts (and/or balloon leaflets), the regimes in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania register strong complaints with the US missions and place restrictions on their informational activities. Officials of US and foreign missions emphasize that harassment of the regime is not necessarily a measure of successful programming.

The recurrent criticism that RFE is unreliable means variously that RFE material is exaggerated, inaccurate, or outdated. Available information offers the following single example: An envoy studied several RFE scripts and cited three instances in which RFE's description of a particular situation differed from that of the Embassy. The Communist Party of the country was described as being in a state of "hysteria" and "disintegration," a characterization which seemed unwarranted by the facts. An RFE script also is cited as describing a situation (allegedly erroneously) as a "revolt" and another as containing inflammatory but ineffective slogans urging action toward overthrowing the government. In addition, the official also uses these examples to demonstrate the discrepancy between RFE propaganda guidance and practice.

In two instances, US officials suggest that the strident tone of RFE propaganda broadcasts is inappropriate and undesirable.

One US official reported that the embassies of friendly powers regard RFE as useless. British Embassy officials are said to compare RFE in one instance to the London Daily Mirror, implying that RFE is unreliable and sensational.

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#### IV. US Newspaper Correspondents

Of the nine evaluations by correspondents containing criticism of RFE, five are extensive: One by Sulzberger (published in the New York Times, 14 May 1956), two by Sy Bourgin (unpublished), one by Theodore Andrica of the Cleveland Press (unpublished), and one by Joseph Wechsberg (published in the Saturday Evening Post, 28 July 1956). Two additional published comments are brief and indirect in their criticism (Raymond of the New York Times and John Freeman of the New Statesman and Nation). The remaining two of the sample of nine are brief unpublished remarks by MacCormac of the New York Times and Russell Jones of the United Press.

All correspondents but Wechsberg believe that RFE has a significant number of listeners.. This agreement suggests that these correspondents do not hold the view that RFE is ineffective for lack of an audience. Wechsberg's remark that "most people don't listen to them VOA and RFE any more," seems an exaggeration of the view found in the reports of some correspondents and officials that there is decreasing interest in American propaganda broadcasts.

Aside from commentary clearly keyed to the news, the correspondents seem to mean by the term propaganda one or more of the following: any form of affirmation of the idea of liberation; incitation or exhortation to resistance (passive, active, or sabotage); advice on how to deal with various recurrent situations or conditions under Communism (collective farms, price changes, rationing); and attacks on individuals.

On the issue of the desirability of propaganda compared with news and information in broadcasts, almost all the correspondents feel that RFE (and/or VOA) broadcasts should carry more news and less propaganda (as defined above). However, Raymond (in the New York Times, 15 January 1956), attempting to evaluate VOA and RFE propaganda on the issue of liberation, states that people do listen to the broadcasts and collect the leaflets sent across the Iron Curtain boundaries. Bourgin concedes that the propaganda tone of the "We Accuse" program, which he finds irritates the government and intellectuals (the latter call it childish), "delighted the plain people the most."

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With these exceptions, all correspondents express the opinion that more news and less propaganda is desired by the satellite audiences. They recommend that primary emphasis in broadcasts be placed on news, followed by scientific and technical information, cultural entertainment, and jazz programs.

The correspondents feel that the least desirable forms of propaganda are the attacks on regime personalities (Sulzberger, Bourgin, Andrica, Wechsberg) and liberation\* propaganda (Bourgin, Andrica, Freeman). They object to attacks on regime personalities because they feel it is petty or that people are mistakenly accused. Objections to liberation propaganda are alleged disappointment in past promises, and a consequent disbelief and cynical dismissal of hopes currently voiced by propaganda. In the case of liberation propaganda, Raymond presented both favorable and unfavorable audience reception.

Similarly judged are the propaganda exhortations to or advice on action such as resistance or response to conditions (Sulzberger, Bourgin, Andrica). The reason advanced for the lack of effectiveness of this aspect of propaganda is that the home audience feels it knows conditions better than the emigres broadcasting such advice, and that it therefore insults the intelligence of the listeners and occasions resentment.

With the exception of those mentioned above, not all correspondents named the specific aspects of propaganda they thought undesirable. All, however, feel that "propaganda" is more or less undesirable. None of the correspondents find approval for such propaganda among those whom they interviewed (with the exception of Raymond and Bourgin noted above).

On the desirability of propaganda in the form of commentary on the news, a similar unanimity does not prevail. Though some reiterate the belief that the satellite audience is not interested in political commentary or political affairs generally, a smaller number recommend it.

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\* Newspaper articles dealing generally with liberation or the satellite populations' views of liberation without specific reference to RFE have been disregarded in this survey. It is not possible to infer that such discussions are intended as criticism of RFE since the idea of liberation is not held exclusively by RFE; also, it has not been determined how significant a role the liberation theme plays in RFE output.

On the issue of RFE unreliability, only two correspondents noted that American propaganda is "wrong" or "late." Sulzberger reiterated this charge in his 14 May column (without distinguishing VOA and RFE). Jones, considered sympathetic to RFE, remarked briefly that Hungarians had told him that events are moving so fast that "RFE is not able to keep up..." The comments of the Polish writers support this observation. Wechsberg cited Czechs as saying: "The radio people seem to think we've become a nation of fools.... We knew of the workers' riots in Ostrava and Pilsen long before the radio broadcasts." In addition, the view that the American radio and the emigre broadcasters have lost touch with the realities behind the Iron Curtain also has been expressed by Sulzberger, Bourgin, Andrica, and Wechsberg.

Such a variety of reactions to broadcast programming were encountered among those interviewed by the correspondents that no pattern of audience preference emerges. Some say more entertainment is wanted; others say less or no entertainment. Intellectuals allegedly are irritated by the "We Accuse" program; the plain people are "delighted" by it. Economic statistics are "ridiculous" and of interest only to "mathematics professors" (Sulzberger); yet Wechsberg finds that information on America's strength is generally wanted. No single program can be expected to be universally popular, and all will be criticized by one group of listeners or another.

In the case of the Polish writers, the Trybuna Ludu correspondent stated that RFE news is too objective and that its effectiveness would be enhanced by giving "political comment" on the news, since "not everyone can draw his own conclusions." This view may be a reflection of his professional outlook as a Communist propagandist committed by doctrine and conviction to the necessity of propaganda and not merely news reporting. He also asserts that the greatest importance is attached by Polish newspaper editors to monitoring RFE. He recommends that RFE pursue the objective of overreaching Polish propaganda on liberalization and point out its "real causes and solutions." However, he cautions against commentaries "classifying various personalities." This may be a reference to the "We Accuse" program to which Western correspondents found adverse reaction in some quarters.

The other Polish writers indirectly support his recommendation on liberalization news and commentary by criticizing

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RFE material for being outdated. They indicate that criticism of the domestic scene currently is so prolific in Polish media that RFE, in its criticism of conditions in Poland, is in danger of losing its previously large audience.

They praise RFE for its effectiveness in convincing the Communists that Poland cannot be sealed off from information from the West and for its "vital" role in countering Communist propaganda. They warn against an "anti-Western radio propaganda" campaign of deception carried out among foreign diplomats and touring journalists in Warsaw by Communists pretending to be spokesmen of the opposition. They also strongly emphasize the desire of Poles for information, and caution against propaganda on the internal situation without the inclusion of new information or cross-reporting.

The accusation that RFE is promoting Communist causes and is infiltrated by Communists appeared in four newspaper reports at the end of May and the beginning of June 1956. Most were news reports traceable to a West German Sudeten anti-RFE campaign. They were largely restricted to citing the public accusation made by the chairman of the Sudeten German Expellees Association, Dr. Rudolf Lodgman von Auen. The only comment at the time supporting the allegation was by columnist Ray Tucker in the Oroville, California Mercury-Register, 22 June 1956, who quoted from the writings of Ferdinand Peroutka, described as head of the RFE Czech desk, apparently to "prove" Peroutka's pro-Communist leanings. All other articles reported the charges of RFE pro-Communism without comment as an incidental factor in discussing growing West German concern with RFE's activity on sovereign German territory.

Two other articles, independent of the von Auen episode, supported the charge concerning RFE's pro-Communism. John B. Crane's column, 21 March 1956, in the Fort Wayne, Indiana News-Sentinel, accompanied by an editorial in the same vein, seemed inclined to accept charges made by a Jiri Brada, "a Czech refugee journalist," that RFE is infiltrated by Communists and that RFE "preaches Socialism."

Twelve additional newspaper articles dating from December 1955 to July 1956 made little of the infiltration charge, discussing instead West German official or BHE (refugee political party) hostility toward RFE. There is no evident inclination in these articles to report RFE in an unfavorable light.

In late 1955, official US despatches from the American Embassy and USIS in Bonn and the American Consulate General in Munich detail the political maneuverings of the Sudeten German refugees to gain a measure of control or influence in RFE, but contain no references that could be construed as discrediting RFE.

V. Views of the Satellite Audience

No definitive conclusions can be drawn from the available material concerning the reactions of the satellite population to RFE broadcasts because of the limited number of reports and the fact that the sources cannot be considered typical of the population as a whole. Nevertheless, examination of available reports indicates that RFE has an extensive listening audience behind the Iron Curtain. All sources stated that members of their family, acquaintances, and fellow workers did likewise.

RFE audiences appear to include both city and rural dwellers, although the more effective jamming of city reception has probably had some deterrent effect. The majority of sources stated that RFE programs are subject to almost continual jamming, although most of them said that they managed to hear programs in which they were interested despite the interference. That jamming is less effective in rural areas is confirmed by several listeners and by the fact that agricultural programs were singled out by at least four sources as particularly enjoyable.

The criticism most frequently expressed by the satellite audience is that RFE broadcasts contain too much propaganda. This comment is made specifically 29 times, more than twice the number of times that any other one criticism is expressed. In addition, the same opinion is implied by a number of sources who express a desire for "more news," "straight news," or "objective news." Sources who complain about the propaganda content of the programs do not in most cases define what they mean by the term. However, the use of qualifying phrases such as "too inflammatory," "exaggerated," "inflammatory broadcasts," "propagandistic and irresponsible political line" suggests that listeners identify as propaganda, program content which openly tends to incite hatred and resentment against the regime. One source believed that some program material was so incendiary in nature that some people might be aroused to active resistance against the regime as a result of listening to it.

Some listeners also find the content of certain programs either dangerous or potentially so. One source stated he

believed that programs calling attention to the misdemeanors of minor officials only served to make such officials more fanatically attached to the regime and more severe toward anti-Communists. Another said that information broadcast concerning border conditions and possible escape routes alerted the border guards and increased their vigilance. Almost as many reports, however, spoke in favor of certain programs as helpful to the satellite audience. Singled out for praise were programs which gave practical advice on how to deal with the regime and its officials. One of the most numerous affirmative comments which sources gave was that RFE broadcasts kept up morale among its satellite hearers. This was said in some cases by persons who made derogatory comments on specific programs or other aspects of RFE broadcasting.

A number of listeners, while disapproving "propaganda," do say that they like anti-regime broadcasts, which would seem to imply approval of unspecified types of propaganda. It does not appear that listeners who comment disapprovingly about propaganda intend to censure the use of news commentators. Commentary programs, particularly political and military, were mentioned by 17 sources as particularly helpful and interesting.

The second most frequent criticism which the satellite audience makes of RFE broadcasts is that the information they convey is often not true. Several sources expressed the conviction that the broadcaster was not sufficiently knowledgeable on events taking place within the satellite or that he had "lost touch" with the people there. Others stated only that they found the information inaccurate or false. A number of listeners preferred BBC or VOA on the grounds that their broadcasts were more accurate or more objective.

Listeners, however, are not unanimously convinced that RFE is untrustworthy. The greatest number of approving comments recorded (29) were for RFE news broadcasts, and sources stated that they believed them to be "objective," "reliable," "up to date" and "frank." News broadcasts were enjoyed because listeners felt that they were their best source of information about domestic developments, other Communist countries, and the international situation.

Almost as many reports criticized the tone of RFE broadcasts as found the content unreliable. The greatest number



of these comments were directed to material which listeners characterized as "vulgar" or containing "rough and vulgar talk." One program was said to be "in bad taste and harmful." Other comments declared the tone of the broadcasts to be "too strident" or "too sarcastic" and decried the use of "insulting epithets and Nazi-like tone." Still other listeners found the programs "dry" and "boring" and delivered in a bad accent.

Some sources, however, characterize RFE broadcasts as "lively" and "interesting." Others comment that the announcer's accent and attitude seems typical of the national audience to which he is speaking.

In commenting on what RFE should feature in its programs, the overwhelming number of requests was for more news. A few sources specified that they wished to hear more internal or local news, and a few asked for foreign or international news. News comments or summaries also were mentioned as desirable. Next most frequently stated was the desire for factual information. Specific requests included information on conditions in which recent emigres find themselves in the West; scientific and medical programs; and programs for agricultural workers. A number of sources asked for more information about life in the West, and specifically in the USA. About an equal number ask to be spared comparisons between conditions in the satellites and the high standard of living in America.

Entertainment is mentioned as desirable by several sources, especially plays, humorous programs, and jazz. Sources vote consistently, however, against programs of semi-classical, classical, and folk music because they are broadcast over the regime radio and can be heard thus more clearly and without danger from regime informers.

Religious programs please some listeners and irritate others in about equal proportions. Listeners who object to them do so on the grounds that the practice of religion is not forbidden in the satellites and that they feel that RFE is patronizing them with such programs.

Other comments ask for more programs for women, youth, intellectuals, and programs which emphasize sports, the shortcomings of the regime, and the accomplishments of famous national heroes. Sources detailing programs they

not enjoy mention long talks, too much oratory, or too superior a tone. A considerable number of sources went on record as approving the variety of RFE programs and the fact that they were planned to include material for different social and intellectual levels.

A number of sources spoke approvingly of RFE's continuous broadcasting schedule and noted that if they missed a program because of severe jamming they could very often listen to a re-broadcast later when the jamming was less effective. One source advocated arranging VOA and RFE schedules so that they did not conflict.

## VI. FEP Balloon Leaflets

Three articles in the New York Times (Sidney Gruson, 30 January and 4 February 1956; and Harrison Salisbury, 12 February 1956) represent the main criticisms of Free Europe Press balloon leaflets available from newspapers. Sulzberger's 14 May 1956 article cites a "friendly ambassador in Czechoslovakia" as describing leaflets containing 10 popular demands for freedom as being "foolish." The New York Herald Tribune, 25 January 1956, cites Russian propaganda supporting Czech protests on the balloons.

Gruson's first article describes a Prague exhibit of balloon propaganda, which portrays the balloons as a physical danger to air flight and to the population, some of whom are claimed in the exhibit to have been injured by the explosion of balloons. His article stresses the Communist origins of the charges. He paraphrases a Czech guide at the exhibition as saying that the pamphlets distributed have lost whatever effectiveness they may have had.

Gruson's second article summarizes the opinion of "many Western diplomats" that the leaflets have "long outlived whatever usefulness they may have had," and that they are "bad propaganda" because they raise internal tension, whereas the aim should be to lessen internal tension with the ultimate effect of loosening ties with the Soviet Union. Admitting the difficulty of measuring the "ordinary Czechoslovak's reaction to his Government's campaign against the balloons," he does cite one "non-Communist white collar worker" to the effect that if a balloon killed a Czech, it would create more ill will than 10 years of Communist propaganda have done.

Salisbury's article also cites "some Western quarters, including some American observers behind the Iron Curtain" as being critical of the balloon propaganda effort. Other than this attribution, Salisbury notes the coordinated, Soviet-directed campaign against the balloons.

Satellite audience reaction to Free Europe Press leaflets is contained in 19 of the 78 reports available on satellite audience reactions to propaganda. All reports considered are of recent (1956) date. A few sources stated that they had heard of the leaflets but had never seen one and had no opinion as to their effectiveness. (These sources are not included in this survey.)

As in the sampling of opinion concerning RFE broadcasts, reports come from defectors, legal emigrants, legal travelers, and residents of the satellite area. Geographically, only three satellites are represented: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. Of the 19 reports, 8 sources are Czech, 5 Hungarian, and 3 Polish.

In all, 24 opinions concerning the leaflets were expressed, since some sources went on record as favoring some aspect of the operation while being opposed to another. The majority of opinions express approval of the leaflets generally (16 in favor, 8 against). Reasons which sources gave for liking the leaflets were similar to those expressed concerning RFE broadcasts. Six responses stated that the leaflets kept up morale and five stated that the leaflets were desirable because they brought information otherwise unavailable to the reader. Other opinions were that they harassed the regime, "interested" the reader, were more convincing than broadcasts because they were more tangible, and could be read over and passed on.

Derogatory opinions were based on the fact that sources did not believe that the leaflets were effective (four) or considered them dangerous because possession might lead to arrest (three), or because the carrier balloons might explode (one). Other sources found them "uninteresting" and "undignified."